

VETERANS



This Legislative Summary Report highlights Veterans policy measures that received a public hearing during the 2021 Regular Legislative Session. The report is organized by sub-topics and includes the measure number; the measure status: enacted [✓] or not enacted [✗]; and a brief description of the measure.

Veterans sub-topics:

- Commemorations and Memorials
- Employment
- Health Care
- Housing
- Military
- Other Legislation

Commemorations and Memorials

- SB 319 ✓ Dedicates a portion of State Capitol State Park grounds for a Vietnam War memorial to be funded and installed by a nonprofit organization dedicated to its establishment.
- SB 441 A ✗ Would have permitted the state to erect roadside memorial signs for veterans who were officially designated as either a prisoner of war or unaccounted for by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency.
- SB 790 A ✗ Would have dedicated a portion of U.S. Highway 30 as the Oregon Veterans Memorial Highway.
- SCR 2 ✗ Would have acknowledged the life of Lieutenant Colonel Patrick James Simpson, United States Army, retired (1940-2019) and recognizes and honored his service to his nation, state, and community.
- SCR 15 ✓ Acknowledges the service and sacrifice of Lance Corporal Jack-Ryan Ostrovsky, United States Marine Corps (1999-2020).
- HB 2644 ✓ Renames a portion of Interstate 5, currently designated the Atomic Veterans Memorial Highway, the Atomic Veterans and Atomic Cleanup Veterans Memorial Highway.
- HB 2700 ✓ Permits state to erect roadside memorial signs for veterans who were officially designated as either a prisoner of war or unaccounted for by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency through a distinct process, separate from the existing concurrent resolution process available to servicemembers killed in action.

Commemorations and Memorials, cont'd

- HCR 12 ✓ Acknowledges the life and valor of Specialist Four Larry Gilbert Dahl, United States Army (1949-1971).

Employment

- SB 184 ✓ Modifies eligibility requirements to claim veterans' preference in public employment by allowing otherwise eligible veterans to certify that they expect to be discharged under honorable conditions within 120 days.
- SB 378 ✗ Would have modified certain provisions concerning public employer interview and selection process of veteran applicants for specified civil service positions; directed the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to establish investigation and nonbinding arbitration program regarding alleged violations of veterans' employment preference statutes; and modified specific provisions for comparative civil claims.




Health Care

- SB 150 ✗ Would have extended sunset for Oregon Veterans' Home physician tax credit from January 1, 2022 to January 1, 2028.
- HB 2139 ✓ Re-establishes, in statute, the Rural Veterans Healthcare Transportation Grant Program within Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to assist with transport of rural veterans to receive health care.
- HB 2452 ✗ Would have extended the tax credit for physicians caring for residents of Veterans' Homes from January 1, 2022 to January 1, 2028.



Housing

- SB 102 ✗ Would have exempted certain temporary, overnight military lodging from state lodging taxes.
- HB 2094 ✓ Authorizes Oregon Housing and Community Services to define "veteran" via rulemaking, for purposes of programs it administers and allows director to delegate signing of housing finance bonds.
- HB 2140 ✓ Reinstates language that was removed in 2019 to allow loans for home improvements and refinancing and authorizes Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to make subordinate loans if certain criteria are met.




Housing, cont'd

- HB 2153  Would have created the Oregon Veterans' Community, run by Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, which would be comprised of residential units for veterans and their immediate family members, as well as medical and social services; also directed Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs Director to enter into contracts for construction, operation, and management of veterans' community.
- HB 2878  Would have directed Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) to develop program where providers contracting with ODVA provide credit guarantees for qualified borrowers for purpose of refinancing home mortgages.
- HB 2904  Would have directed Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) to create and administer a program where ODVA purchases residential properties to rent to, or otherwise provide housing to veterans experiencing or on the brink of experiencing homelessness.

Military

- SB 306  Would have directed the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to report on policy proposals for tax treatment of military pensions by January 1, 2023.
- HB 2847 A  Would have appropriated General Fund moneys to the Oregon Military Department for nine additional positions in the Service Member and Family Support Program.

Other Legislation

- SB 320  Enables nonprofits serving veterans or members of the armed forces whose duty station is a warrior transition unit to conduct group excursions using free angling or shellfish harvest licenses issued by agents of the State Fish and Wildlife Commission with certain requirements.
- SB 534  Would have expanded free use of state parks, individual campsites, and day use areas to include parents, siblings, spouses, and dependents of service members of the U.S. Armed Forces killed in action.
- HB 2141 A  Would have repealed sunset on Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program.

Other Legislation, cont'd

- HB 2230 ✗ Would have appropriated an unspecified amount of money to the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, to provide public guardian and conservator services to veterans.
- HB 2856 ✗ Would have directed Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to study and make recommendations regarding improvements to operations of department.
- HB 2859 A ✗ Would have directed Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to create and fill five full-time positions and appropriates funds from the Veterans' Affairs Dedicated Lottery Fund for the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program, Campus Veteran Resource Center Grant Program, Veteran Services Grant Fund, and grants to counties for veterans' courts.
- HB 3098 ✗ Would have directed the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to create and maintain a database of veterans' services providers and other supports available to veterans and directs the department to raise public awareness of database among veterans.